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Draft report

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Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
(Item 4 (a))

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2014

1. At its 5th meeting, on 3 June 2015, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2014 (E/2015/71).

2. The Director of the secretariat of CEB introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Delegations welcomed the report, expressing appreciation for the comprehensive and high-quality information on the work of the Board presented therein. Useful enhancements to the content of the CEB website were acknowledged. Delegations recognized the Board's increasingly important role in promoting system-wide coherence and coordination, the elimination of duplication, greater effectiveness and a more efficient use of resources to foster development and international security. One delegation said that the work of CEB was essential if the United Nations system were to continue to deliver results and ensure policy coherence in respect of the many mandates approved.

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4. Delegations recognized that the intergovernmental mandates to which the Board was responding were clearly identified in the report and emphasized the importance of continuing to ensure that its work was guided by such mandates.

5. The Board's efforts to promote policy coordination and coherence in areas including economic and social development, South-South and triangular cooperation and climate change were welcomed. One delegation also welcomed CEB efforts to support United Nations conferences and summits on specific issues, such as those pertaining to small island developing States, and in that context another delegation inquired about a joint initiative on tourism development being supported by nine United Nations system organizations that had been presented at the CEB high-level side event during the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. Support was also voiced for the preliminary steps taken to coordinate system-wide assistance to help to prepare for the transition to the post-2015 development agenda, although several delegations emphasized the need to avoid prejudging the outcome of the intergovernmental negotiations on the agenda, including in relation to action to be taken by the system in support of the new development framework. Delegations commended the selection of youth employment as an area of focus of the Board in view of the subject's importance in achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development.

6. Delegations welcomed the assistance provided by the United Nations system to Member States to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals through the review by CEB of implementation at the country level and requested further information on the activities being carried out at that level. Clarification was sought as to whether Goal 8, on a global partnership for development, had been considered in the context of the review.

7. With regard to South-South and triangular cooperation in the area of agriculture, the importance of strengthening cooperation with other United Nations entities, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme, and of involving entities such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other relevant financial entities was underlined. On climate change, the library of United Nation system publications compiled by the Working Group on Climate Change of the High-level Committee on Programmes for the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was seen as valuable; in particular, one delegation noted the increasing need to raise awareness of the subject among the less-educated and illiterate. CEB was encouraged to ensure that its input to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, to be held in Ecuador in 2016, would be released in a timely manner to enable Member States to use it properly.

8. Delegations welcomed United Nations system-wide coordination efforts on the extremely important matters of cybercrime and cybersecurity. Details were requested on the measures to strengthen inter-agency coordination in that regard and clarification was sought on the United Nations entities that had led the initiative.

9. Some delegations welcomed efforts to improve the effectiveness and impact of operational activities of the United Nations system and to support United Nations country teams. Delegations raised questions on the scope of the mandate to deliver as one United Nations and stressed the voluntary nature of the initiative. A request

was made for an update on the impact of the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil to be included in the report for 2015.

10. Delegations underscored the crucial role of CEB in improving and demonstrating innovation with regard to the administrative and management functions of the United Nations system and reiterated their appreciation for the Board's focus on the harmonization and simplification of business practices in the areas of finance, procurement, human resources and common support services through the High-level Committee on Management. One delegation noted that efforts to date had succeeded in improving efficiency in terms of resource use, transparency and accountability. Delegations urged CEB to continue work on human resources management, strengthening transparency and accountability and improving finance and budgeting mechanisms. The importance of analysing the impact of administrative activities on improving the work of the system was also noted.

11. On procurement, delegations welcomed the significant progress made on collaborative initiatives, in particular to increase access to United Nations system procurement by vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. One delegation sought further information on the mandate for harmonizing procurement guidance, as well as on the work of the Procurement Network on long-term agreements for the procurement of vehicles and fuel. Another noted that the further deployment of the Secretariat's enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, had not been mentioned in the report and that it could have an impact on procurement, in particular in field locations (e.g. in relation to real-time updates on ongoing procurement). One delegation observed that, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of procurement and to avoid duplication in procuring items already in storage, improved asset management and coordination with acquisitions were necessary.

12. Delegations showed interest in the work by the Finance and Budget Network of the High-level Committee on Management on the development of a common definition of operating costs. Questions were raised on the specifics of the agreed definition, including whether it had already been approved by the executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226.

13. Delegations requested further details on efforts to ensure coherence and complementarity in oversight functions, audit and evaluation throughout the United Nations system, including on the "three lines of defence" model of the Institute of Internal Auditors and on how coherence between the approach on accountability and risk management could be ensured. Clarification was sought as to whether oversight bodies such as the Joint Inspection Unit, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Board of Auditors had been consulted about the reference risk management, oversight and accountability model before its adoption by the High-level Committee on Management.

14. Regarding activities undertaken by the Human Resources Network of the High-level Committee on Management, delegations welcomed the exchange of information among human resources directors of member organizations and the creation of a working group to further identify good practices in key performance management areas, as recommended by the Committee on Programme and Coordination at its fifty-fourth session. More information on the pilot schemes for performance-based rewards and recognition was requested, including in relation to

the mention in the report of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the United Nations Office for Project Services. Delegations welcomed progress made in the areas of performance management, inter-agency mobility and recruitment of local staff and expressed interest in the challenges that remained to be addressed and the way forward.

15. Delegations sought clarification on the status of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/292 on multilingualism and welcomed the initiatives to promote and facilitate multilingualism undertaken by United Nations system organizations to date. One stressed the need to channel resources to strengthen translation and interpretation capacity.

16. An update on the status of the feasibility study on enterprise resource planning interoperability mentioned in paragraph 42 of the report was requested, as was further information on the United Nations system data catalogue.

17. Delegations expressed appreciation for the update on the system-wide implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and commended the Board for its role in promoting their adoption to improve the quality of financial reporting and harmonization throughout the system and to enhance transparency and accountability. Further details on cooperation between CEB and the Joint Inspection Unit were requested.

Conclusions and recommendations

18. **The Committee reiterated its recommendations to the General Assembly to bring to the attention of the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, the following concerns:**

(a) **The need to ensure that the Board's activities and initiatives, including those relating to system-wide coherence, encompassing also the voluntary adoption of "Delivering as one" as defined in General Assembly resolution 67/226, section IV.C, were fully in line with intergovernmental mandates;**

(b) **The need to ensure enhanced alignment of the measures of the High-level Committee on Management with the existing United Nations legislative framework, including in the area of procurement.**

19. **The Committee recognized the contributions of CEB in 2014 to the enhancement of United Nations system-wide coherence and coordination in policy, operational and management matters.**

20. **The Committee recognized the work of CEB on the harmonization and simplification of business practices and welcomed the instances in which opportunities for efficiencies and the reduction of administrative and procedural burdens had been created, aiming at increasing the coherence, coordination, effectiveness, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system. The Committee reiterated its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to address that issue.**

21. **The Committee took note of the establishment of the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil as an effort to streamline key operational areas of participating agencies by consolidating support services and recommended that**

the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to provide an update on the matter in the context of the next CEB report.

22. **The Committee also noted the initiative of CEB to share good practices in performance management through the exchange of experiences among human resources directors of participating organizations and recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to promote good practices among participating organizations.**

23. **The Committee recalled paragraph 22 of General Assembly resolution 69/273 and recommended that the Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to promote the strategic use of long-term agreements, as appropriate, with regard to procurement activities in the United Nations system.**

24. **The Committee recognized the continued efforts of CEB to enhance collaboration on procurement activities, including increasing the opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue his efforts in that regard.**

25. **The Committee recognized the intrinsic interlinkage between poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development and stressed the importance of mobilizing capacity and resources for supporting the implementation of the future global development agenda. The Committee emphasized the key role to be played by CEB in ensuring coordinated United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda, in accordance with relevant intergovernmental mandates. For that purpose, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to include in the report of CEB to the Committee at its fifty-sixth session information on ways and means of strengthening that role to foster policy coherence in the United Nations system in order to ensure coordinated and effective action on the wide range of programmatic, management and operational issues linked to that global agenda.**

26. **The Committee took note of the establishment of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Task Team, coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and called upon the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to promote, within existing mandates, among the funds and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system, the continuation of mainstreaming support for South-South cooperation into the regular country-level programming of operational activities for development.**

27. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to present the system-wide input to the new urban agenda well in advance of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Housing and**

Sustainable Urban Development, to be held in Jakarta from 25 to 27 July 2016, to allow for its proper consideration by Member States.

28. **The Committee recognized the continued efforts of CEB to engage with Member States, including, but not limited to, the use of its website, to further enhance and strengthen the Board's transparency and accountability to Member States.**

29. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to foster a coordinated approach to multilingualism in the United Nations system, in accordance with the relevant Assembly resolutions.**